



## The New York Public Library Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

### **Silas Deane letters**

1767-1785

MssCol 4310

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Compiled by Casey Babcock, 2015

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Deane, Silas, 1737-1789

**Title:** Silas Deane letters

**Date:** 1767-1785

**Size:** .1 linear feet (1 folder)

**Source:** Donated by John S. Kennedy as part of the Emmet collection, 1896, and J. Pierpont Morgan as part of the Ford collection, 1899, and purchase, 1934

**Abstract:** Silas Deane (1737-1789) was an American lawyer and merchant, member of the Continental Congress from Connecticut, 1774-1776, and Congressional agent and diplomat in France, 1776-1778. Recalled in 1778 under controversial circumstances, Deane returned to Europe in 1780 as a private citizen and died in 1789 en route to America. Silas Deane letters, dated 1767-1785, are addressed to his stepchildren Sarah (Sally) Webb and Samuel Blachley Webb, and friends Thomas Mumford and Thomas Cushing, New England merchants and politicians. Letters to Sally in Boston, 1767-1769, mention her mother's illness and offer advice for Sally's education and self-improvement. His 1778 letter to Thomas Cushing in Boston asks him to assist Sally, now the widow of John Simpson, a Loyalist. Letters written at Philadelphia to Thomas Mumford in Connecticut, 1774-1775, tell of Congressional business and colonial disputes, his participation in the Secret Committee to obtain support from Europe, and the need to develop an American naval force. Deane's letter of July 16, 1785 at London to Samuel Blachley Webb gives a careful study of American commercial prospects and Great Britain's rising manufacturing economy. A letter dated March 7, 1779 addressing "my Dear Col[onel]," and referring to an exchange, may be addressed to Samuel Blachley Webb, at that time an American army colonel and prisoner of war.

**Preferred citation:** Silas Deane letters, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

**Processing note:** Compiled by Casey Babcock, 2015

### **Custodial History**

Most material in the collection was originally received as part of the Emmet and Ford collections.

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

Diplomats  
Lawyers  
Merchants  
Politicians  
Soldiers  
Statesmen

### **Geographic Names**

Great Britain -- Commerce -- United States  
New England -- Social life and customs -- To 1775  
United States -- Commerce -- Great Britain  
United States -- History -- Revolution, 1775-1783  
United States -- Politics and government -- 1775-1783

### **Names**

Cushing, Thomas, 1725-1788 -- recipient  
Deane, Silas, 1737-1789  
Mumford, Thomas, 1728-1799 -- recipient  
Webb, Samuel Blachley, 1753-1807 -- recipient  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 -- recipient

## Container List

### Sarah Webb

- f. 1 1767 April 17  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1768 May 29  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1768 June 19  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1769 April 24  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1769 August 7  
Webb, Sarah, 1752-1832 (Recipient)

### Thomas Mumford

- f. 1 1774 August 1  
Mumford, Thomas, 1728-1799 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1774 November 28  
Mumford, Thomas, 1728-1799 (Recipient)
- f. 1 1775 October 15  
Mumford, Thomas, 1728-1799 (Recipient)
- f. 1 Thomas Cushing 1778 August 20  
Cushing, Thomas, 1725-1788 (Recipient)
- f. 1 [Samuel Blachley Webb] 1779 March 7  
Webb, Samuel Blachley (Recipient)
- f. 1 Samuel Blachley Webb 1785 July 16  
Webb, Samuel Blachley (Recipient)